

Basingstoke Observer

Thursday, December 7 - Wednesday, December 13, 2017

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New offices will be a real 'business destination'

Page 3



More help needed to make a real change for the homeless

By Eva Astreinidou

A CHARITABLE group is appealing for more help to fund its support for homeless people as the winter weather sets in.

The Real Change, Not Loose Change appeal has so far raised more than £4,600 thanks to the support of the community in and around Basingstoke.

It needs to reach its target of £16,000 by January 14 for the money to be distributed to three local homelessness schemes.

The campaign, now in its second year, is run by Basingstoke's Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP).

SIP chair and borough council deputy leader Terri Reid said: "No one should be complacent about the scale of the problem.

"Nationally rough sleeping rates have increased 150 per cent in the last few years, and the borough council has allocated around £2million in the next budget year towards homelessness and homelessness support.

"But the Real Change campaign is a way for local people to be involved. They can be sure that their donations will be well used and will really make a difference."

The SIP campaign raised more than £13,000 in 2016, helping local churches set up the pop-up Night Light Shelter and allowing the Camrose Day centre to open a third day a week with a new shower room.

This year, the £16,000 package will

be divided across three initiatives - £5,000 would go towards covering costs to keep the Night Light shelter open, just over £4,100 will be used to extend services at the Camrose drop-in centre, and over £5,400 will fund services at Julian House, which provides an outreach service for the homeless.

The hope is that the funds raised will cover the shelter costs for seven days a week until the end of February and help pay for services at Julian House, where people can safely store their personal belongings.

Camrose Centre, which currently operates in Glebe Hall at St Michael's Church on Tuesdays and Thursdays to provide a continuous self-service breakfast and hot lunch, would also be able to extend its services.

The service connects homeless people to agencies and organisations that can provide support on housing, mental health, legal matters and sexual health.

Cllr Reid added: "Please, please donate again this year and help the most vulnerable in our community at a particularly difficult time for them."

In November 2016 an official count estimated 26 people were sleeping on the borough's streets at any one time.

To donate to the cause, visit spacehive.com/realchange-basingstoke-2017.

Alternatively, call Streetlink on 0300 500 0914.

Picture: Sarah Gaunt



Cast of characters celebrate Christmas

Santa and his helpers brought a special dose of festive cheer to Basingstoke over the weekend. The famous Santa parade returned to the town's Festival Place on Sunday.

With December 25 just over two weeks away, Father Christmas and a whole host of seasonal characters marched from Porchester Square to Festival Square, sharing festive cheer with supporters along the way.

Children can meet Santa at the woodland walk and grotto at the centre and enjoy some augmented reality dancing penguins and animatronic Christmas tree until December 24.

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Contact Tony on 01256 952180

tony@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Distribution &**Subscriptions**

Telephone: 01256 952180

distribution@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Newsdesk

Group Editor:

Karen Neville

01235 516931

karen@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Reporter:

Eva Astreinidou

01235 516930

eve@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Production

Telephone: 01256 952180

studio@taylornewspapers.co.uk

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The Debt AdvisersT: 01420 446244 / E: matt@beaconllp.com**News Bites****Efit released**

POLICE are continuing their search for three men who assaulted two people after forcing their way into a flat.



This efit has been released of a man police would like to speak to following the aggravated burglary at Sinclair Drive, Basingstoke on November 23.

The men assaulted a 38-year-old woman and a 35-year-old man before leaving. Nothing was taken.

Two of the men had their faces covered, the third who did not, was described by the victims as aged in his thirties and having Asian appearance.

He was also described as being 6ft 1ins tall, of muscular build, with a neat black beard, and was wearing a black baseball cap and black clothing.

If you can help, call 101.

Fun at Camrose

BASINGSTOKE Football Club are hosting special events in the lead-up to their move from the Camrose.

A carol service and a prize draw are planned for next Sunday from 7pm, while the club are also inviting supporters to ring in 2018 at the last ever new year's eve party at the venue.

The carol service will raise funds for St Michael's Hospice and also contribute to the Boost the Players budget.

Visit <http://btfc.co.uk/camrose-carol-service/>. For NYE tickets, buy behind the bar at Camrose.



trampoline park.

"We're particularly excited about the NinjaTAG course which uses sensors around the arena to communicate with wristbands, allowing players to compete in a variety of exciting challenges.

"There's also an amazing free-running 'stunt-box' zone complete with padded full-size Lamborghini to leap and climb over, 30ft high cyber towers, 25ft high super slides, battle beams, climbing walls, wipe out zone, a giant foam pit and even soft play for pre-schoolers."

The venue's online booking system is also now live.

Flip Out Basingstoke, which also has a diner on site, will be open from 9am to 10pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 9pm on Sundays, with sessions priced £9.95 for one hour and £14.95 for two hours.

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Office building promises to be a 'destination'

By Eva Astreinidou

WORK has started on Basingstoke's first dedicated office building in 15 years.

Promising to be the town's next 'business destination', construction on The Florence Building at Basing View is due to be completed in July.

Comprising five floors, the building will feature more than 60,000 sq ft of office space, 203 under-cover car parking spaces, 24 electric vehicle points and 48 cycle spaces.

Mark Glatman, chief executive of property developers Abstract said: "With works now well under way, we are proud to bring The Florence Building to the market at a time when we are seeing occupiers upgrade their accommodation to the highest specification to attract and retain the best staff. Our development offers uncompromising value and is the first new-build office in the town in 15 years.

"[The plans give] a contemporary overview of Basingstoke as a business destination, and all that the town has to offer. A tight design and procurement process will offer occupiers the lowest cost per workstation of any new build office in the South East."



The cost per workstation based on an occupancy per person is £3,400 per year, compared to £3,700 in Farnborough or £5,000 in Reading.

Mr Glatman added: "Basingstoke is the third fastest growing and seventh most affluent town in the UK, with access to a significant pool of talent."

Basing View features a £10million landscaped area and a mix of office, retail and leisure amenities for staff.

The site is an eight-minute walk to the station and from there 45 minutes to London Waterloo and Heathrow.

A Village Hotels with gym, swimming pool, café and meeting and events space will soon join the on-site John Lewis Home and Waitrose.

To watch a fly-through video, visit <http://www.theflorencebuilding.com/video/>

Share your views on borough's boundaries

HAVE your say on proposals to reduce the number of councillors and redraw electoral boundaries in Basingstoke and Deane.

Under proposals by the Boundary Commission the structure of the council would change to include six fewer councillors in future.

The independent body now needs information from people and groups across the area to help it to produce a new pattern of wards to accommodate 54 councillors.

Professor Colin Mellors, chair of the commission, said: "If you have a view about which communities or neighbourhoods should be part of the same council ward, then we want to hear from you. And if you think a road, river or railway makes for a strong boundary between communities in your part of Basingstoke and Deane, then this consultation is for you."

In drawing up new boundaries, the Commission aims to deliver electoral equality for voters in

council elections so that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters.

After consultation evidence is gathered, draft recommendations will be published in May 2018.

Any new electoral arrangements would come into effect at the local elections in 2019.

Residents who want to submit their views have until February 12, 2018.

To take part in the consultation, visit consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

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Picture: Hampshire Fire and Rescue



Firefighters tackle 12-hour fire

MORE than 50 firefighters tackled a huge thatched roof blaze over 12 hours.

Crews from Basingstoke, Fleet and Hartley Wintney responded to reports of the fire at Froyle Road in Alton last Thursday just before 5pm.

The fire was finally extinguished just before 5am. No one was harmed or injured.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue said

the roof and first floor were completely destroyed by the fire, while the ground floor was destroyed by fire, smoke and water.

The fire was tackled with 12 breathing apparatus, four jets and the use of one aerial ladder platform.

Crews remained at the scene to damp down and turn over the area to ensure scene safety.

News Bites

Two bank branches set to close in 2018

TWO NatWest bank branches near Basingstoke will be closing their doors due to a lack of customers.

The Chineham and Mortimer branches will be shutting down in the new year.

The branch in Chineham will close on February 21, with the branch in Mortimer closing later in the year on June 25.

Since 2014, the number of customers using branches across the UK has fallen by 40 per cent.

Customers will still be able to use online or telephone banking, as well as visiting the post office or another branch.

Hospital pantomime

HOSPITAL staff will be taking a break from saving lives to stage Jack and the Bastingstalk pantomime next month.

The Hampshire Hospital Pantomime Players, a group made up of consultants, doctors, nurses, midwives and admin staff from Basingstoke and Winchester hospital will be taking to the stage at The Haymarket on January 13.

Staff across the hospitals volunteer their time to perform in order to raise money for charity.

This year's nominated charities are The Ark Cancer centre, the Pink Place and The North Hampshire Medical Fund.

To book tickets, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y9l48rfj>.

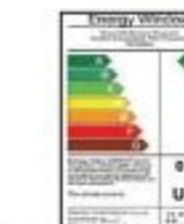


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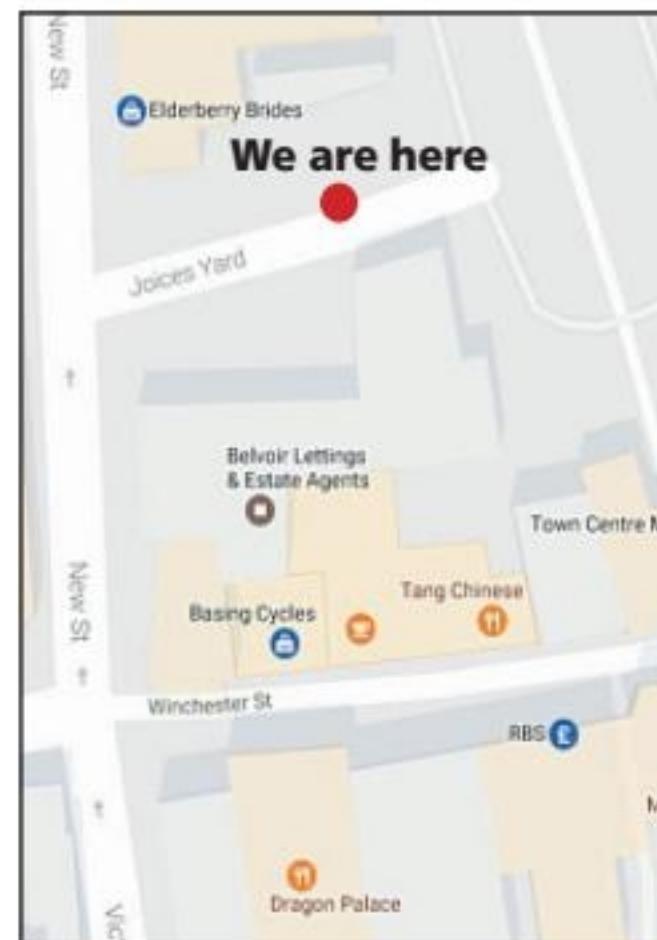
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Consultation in new year on Manydown

By Eva Astreinidou

THE new year will bring the chance for the public to have its say on plans to build up to 3,520 homes at Manydown.

Progress of the plans was discussed at a meeting on Tuesday with infrastructure and government funding the priorities.

The proposals were submitted in March after a two-year wait and progress in carrying out the plans in West Basingstoke has been stalled due to amendments based on previous consultations.

John Izett, Basingstoke and Deane's cabinet member for property and development, said: "We are committed to making

Manydown an exemplary development.

"This means making the best use of the land to deliver a range of much-needed housing and create thriving new communities that integrate well with the neighbouring areas, with well-designed and planned infrastructure.

"Since the outline planning application was submitted, the planning authority has carried out a consultation and following that we have been discussing what amendments need to be made in light of some important points raised during the feedback.

"This has taken some time as this is a large, complex and important development and it is vital

we give it proper and extensive consideration."

Phase one of Manydown has the potential for between 3,200 and 3,520 homes including shared ownership and rent.

A final outline application is expected to include two primary schools, a secondary school, shops and community facilities as well as housing on the 321-hectare site.

Also included are children's play areas, sports pitches, allotments, and a 250-acre country park.

The number of houses has been scaled back from 4,000.

It is hoped construction can begin in early 2019.

Public consultation details are yet to be announced.

Youngsters want better food in hospital

YOUNG people helped set priorities on how children's health services can be improved.

Members of the Basingstoke Hospital youth forum identified food and noise at night-time as two factors that could be improved.

The youth forum, which gives young people aged between 11 and 16 who have been treated at the hospital the chance to shape the way children's services are run, was set up earlier this year to work alongside hospital staff.

Donna Green, chief nurse at Hampshire Hospitals who attended a meeting with the group, said: "I really appreciate that [the members of the forum] are giving up their time to help us to improve our services for children."

"If you have been treated at Basingstoke Hospital and have ideas about things you think we could do in a different way, please apply to join the Basingstoke Hospital Youth Forum."

Youngsters said the menu is not always child-friendly and that the meals do not always fill them up.

The group is now working with



Members of the Basingstoke Hospital Youth Forum with staff from Hampshire Hospitals, including chief nurse, Donna Green, and Judith Bennett, child health clinical matron

the hospital's catering team and will get the chance to sample a range of the options available during their next meeting.

In addition, after hearing that young people sometimes found it hard to sleep at night on the children's ward, the hospital has

signed up to the Sleep for Health in Hospital (SHH) programme and is looking at ways of reducing brightness and the noise caused by doors, ward phones and alarms.

Visit www.hampshirehospitals.nhs.uk/bhyf to apply to be a member of the forum.

College among best for skills training

BASINGSTOKE College of Technology has been ranked as one of the top colleges in the country.

An education magazine revealed the college had the third highest score for its advanced technical skills training according to the annual performance league tables.

BCoT featured in the '16-18 Positive Progression League Table' in FE Week, making it one of the leading colleges in Hampshire for students going into education, employ-

ment and training destinations.

Principal Anthony Bravo said: "These important performance figures, which are based on key criteria published by the Department of Education, show that we deliver exceptional outcomes for our students."

"We are by far the very best choice locally for advanced technical skills training and there really is no reason why anyone should want to travel out of the

town with BCoT on the doorstep providing exceptional training and outcomes."

The FE Week league tables also ranked BCoT in the upper third of 202 colleges nationwide for learner satisfaction, employer satisfaction, young and adult learners' progression.

Earlier this year, the college received top honours in the National Achievement Tables issued by the government.

Custom-made gates stolen from community centre

A £580 wooden custom-made gate paid for by community fundraising events was stolen from a garden area in a community centre.

The 1.5 metre gate was stolen from Sycamore Halls Community Centre. It was discovered missing at 9am on Saturday, November 25 when the people who look after the

hall went to unlock it

Shirley Keer, chairperson of the Sycamore Halls community association, reported the incident.

She said: "The gates cost the community centre £580 which was raised by selling boot sale items, teas and coffees and raffles.

"The SHCA have worked tire-

lessly to raise the morale of Winklebury since the loss of Fort Hill Community School and the supermarket and having no medical centre."

"The gates were a symbol of new beginnings."

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Key of the door for new centre

By Eva Astreinidou

THE keys to a highly-anticipated £760,000 community centre have been officially handed over to local groups from Beggarwood.

The modern centre at Beggarwood Park, which will include rooms for meetings and events as well as a community café, will open to the public at a later date.

Members of Hatch Warren and Beggarwood Community Association now have access to the new facility after a special ceremony with Basingstoke and Deane borough councillor Simon Bound.

The cabinet member for communities gave the keys for the new facility to the chairman of the association Karen Coomber, and Father Michael Smith, chair of Beggarwood Community Centre last week.

Cabinet member for communities, Cllr Bound said: "I am delighted to officially hand over the keys to this

wonderful new community centre to local people and wish the association every success for the future. Residents, from the very young to the elderly, will benefit greatly from the facility. A range of activities will be on offer and many types of events can be enjoyed in this park setting."

Local people will be able to have their say on how the new centre will be run and will be able to book the facility for activities or events such as birthday parties.

Volunteers are also being sought to help manage the centre.

Cllr Bound added: "I would urge anybody who is interested in having their say on how the facility is managed to become a trustee or volunteer to help to ensure that the centre continues to prosper in the years ahead."

A full timetable of activities at the centre will be unveiled soon.

The contemporary building has been constructed with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council funding



of £760,000, received from developer contributions.

For more information, or to volunteer as a trustee, email office@hatchwarren.org or visit www.beggarwood.org.

From left, Ben Tuffin from contractor LST Projects; Karen Coomber, chairman HW&BCA; Cllr Simon Bound, cabinet member for communities and Father Michael Smith from Beggarwood Community Facility

Engaging children in the history of the First World War

MORE than 100 schoolchildren from Hampshire took part in a special event to help remember and commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

RAF Odiham hosted an event last week for Never Such Innocence, a national charity aimed at engaging children between nine and 16 in the history behind the war.

The event was part of a nationwide

roadshow organised by the charity, which has also launched a competition inviting children to submit poetry, art and songs inspired by the events of the Great War.

Lady Lucy French, great-granddaughter of Field Marshal Sir John French and the charity's founder said: "We are overwhelmed with the engagement we have seen from schools across the country and

touched by the deep and emotionally sensitive responses of the young people involved. We are looking forward to seeing the creative work of the children at RAF Odiham and to inspire more children in the south to take part in the commemorations of 2018 than ever before."

Attending the event were children from Robert May's School, Bohunt School, Eggars School, Cove Junior

School and South Farnham School.

Group Captain Lee Turner was one of the key speakers at the event.

He said: "The hosting of such an event, during the Station's own 80th anniversary and ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force itself, serves as a reminder of the enormous debt of gratitude we owe to the generations of servicemen and women."

News Bites

Water mains planned

A £950,000 project that will see two new water mains in Greywell and Odiham is due to start in April.

Once complete, the new pipelines aim to 'keep taps running' while also improving the capacity of the underground water network as the community grows.

Ben McKellar, project manager at South East Water, said: "While our work to install new pipelines like this is essential to keep taps running, we are keen to ensure our work impacts the local community as little as possible."

"We have looked very closely at how we can lay the pipes safely while keeping disruption in the local community to a minimum. As a result, a large section of the new pipelines will be laid in private land but we will need to use a mixture of road closures and traffic lights for short sections of the project."

To keep updated on the progress of the plans, visit <https://corporate.southeastwater.co.uk/greywell>.

Extra seasonal seats

MORE seats on longer trains will be available for people travelling in the lead-up to Christmas.

South West Railway will provide longer trains with extra capacity on peak routes from December 11.

Three will be extra carriages on the Waterloo to Basingstoke service - 16.42, 17.11 and 19.12 - until January.

The changes are made possible due to an £800million expansion of platforms at Waterloo.

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Customers and staff celebrate raising £300 at a bauble decorating session

FAMILIES and children in Basingstoke raised £300 for charity by hosting a fun-filled Christmas bauble decorating session.

The event in late November at B&Q brought together young people and their families to help donate funds to North Hants medical fund, St Michael's Hospice and Chalk Ridge School.

With a craft table set up and an abundance of glitter at the ready, little ones – and not so little ones – got crafty in the name of a good cause.

The money raised, the tree and all the personalised decorations were then donated to the charities.

B&Q Basingstoke store man-

ager Dave Burnette said: "We have had a brilliant day raising money for three causes close to the heart of our community.

"We are thrilled to have raised over £300 and we have been overwhelmed by the support and the colourful designs created by those who have joined us in store, the trees look brilliant."

Be Smart to improve all-round life quality

By Eva Astreinidou

BASINGSTOKE has to undergo a technological revamp to give its residents a better quality of life.

That is the vision of the Smart Basingstoke programme, an ambitious plan to adopt smart technology that was discussed in a meeting on Monday.

The programme aims to support economic growth through 'innovation and job creation', improve access to services and support those who need help through digital solutions to 'enable residents to live independently'.

The study also identifies how existing projects will help play a part in the town's transformation.

The schemes include the Manydown development that will provide up to 3,520 new homes in the area, the existing transport strategy that outlines plans to improve

road infrastructure, as well as the Basing View regeneration scheme and the 5G test bed.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council discussed the scheme at a meeting.

Cllr Hannah Golding, cabinet member for digital innovation and inclusion, said: "The project has an ambitious agenda, building on assets we already have such as the 5G test bed. It aims to deliver in the key areas of transport, housing and health - areas that impact all who live here."

"The council is in a strong position to work within these networks to bring in new technology and more connected ways of working."

Part of the vision is adopting a smart city plan, which would tap into data to manage congestion, maximise energy efficiency, enhance public security and allocating resources where they are

needed. This could mean, for instance, that council-run services will use more accessible cloud-based technology to respond to reports and concerns of residents, including those who are vulnerable.

Research carried out by independent consultants UrbanTide concludes that not proceeding with the recommendations of the Smart Basingstoke study would 'restrict growth' and affect the borough's 'attractiveness as a place to live, visit and work'.

There is currently no dedicated budget to carry out the Smart Basingstoke programme but an allocation of £25,000 has been made through the Town Centre Programme budget to support any initial developments.

The plans will be formally submitted to cabinet for a decision in March 2018.

School scores 3G pitch thanks to FA

A SCHOOL in Basingstoke has been awarded more than £300,000 to build a new 3G football pitch.

Thanks to the Premier League and the FA facilities fund, Vyne Community School will be constructing a new 106m x 70m floodlit artificial grass pitch with added car parking spaces.

The school has been awarded a grant of £316,594 to carry out the project, with construction anticipated to start early in the New Year.

The town's MP Maria Miller said: "I welcome this funding to improve and build new football facilities for local young residents. Availability of good sporting facilities can encourage participation, which in turn helps children and adults to develop their physical and mental wellbeing. I encourage other eligible local organisations to apply for funding."

Sharon Edwards, community manager at the Vyne School, said: "We are delighted to have received

the funding."

She added that the school has to officially appoint contractors and is still working on the planning conditions.

As part of the grants handed out by the FA fund, Hatch Warren Phoenix YFC has also been awarded a grant of £270 to replace their unsafe goal posts.

The FA Facilities Fund aims to improve the experience of playing football and helping to increase participation in football.

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Historic cricket club's future on a sticky wicket

By Eva Astreinidou

INCREASING rent and dwindling player numbers are putting the future of Whitchurch Cricket Club in doubt.

One supporter of the club says it is in a 'perilous state' and that if the issues are not resolved it could fold after more than 200 years.

Clive Osmond said: "[The majority of] our players come from Whitchurch. With its 200 years of history it would be a very great loss to the town."

He added that Lord Denning, who was president of the club for many years, had negotiated a generous rent but that since his passing the club has had to pick up the increasing rent payments and longer contract periods.

He said the 'demise' of the club is also due to the isolation of Parsonage Meadow, which has brought with it a 'vulnerability to vandals' who trashed the mowing equipment and part of the pavilion building earlier this year.

The club runs two sides, one on Wednesday which is made up local businessmen and one on a Saturday. Mr Osmond said that players for the

Wednesday sessions have diminished and that the league only plays one game per year.

The Saturday players still take part in the Hampshire League, but the team has had a very difficult year in raising a full team, he added.

He said: "Whitchurch CC Saturday XI has always prided themselves on selecting local cricketers, which makes you wonder why we are not able to raise enough cricket interest in the town."

Whitchurch Town Council discussed the club at a meeting last month. Chairman John Buckley said: "Whitchurch Cricket Club is a much-loved local institution and a quintessential English ground and one of the town's treasures with its traditional pavilion, staddle stoned barn and under the bells of the parish church.

"I urge those who wish it to remain as such to apply for an Asset of Community Value and I hope the town council will support this. The ground is part of our lovely town's character and should not be lost."

To help support the club or play for the town's cricket team, contact wcc200yrs@outlook.com.



Staff at the new-look McDonald's in Brighton Hill which has undergone many changes to improve the customer experience

They're lovin' the new look

A McDonald's in Basingstoke is back in business after a major digital makeover that has helped create 20 jobs.

Restaurant staff in Brighton Hill retail park and the town's deputy mayor councillor Sean Keating celebrated the reopening last week.

The restaurant, owned by local franchisee Tony Bennett, has undergone a revamp that aims to improve the customer experience with new kiosks and tablets.

Mr Bennett, who owns and operates 12 restaurants including the one in Basingstoke, said: "These changes are designed to make our customers' experience as positive as possible - whether that's providing people with a chance to get to grips with using a



tablet in a relaxed environment, or providing parents with a quick and easy way of ordering their food."

"When ordering with the new kiosks customers now have the option to make different food choices, for example swapping fries for a side salad or adding a fruit bag to their children's Happy Meal."

The restaurant will now have six self-order kiosks that will allow customers to browse the menu, look at nutritional information and personalise their meals.

The changes have been designed with changing customer needs in mind, with new dedicated dining room hosts and table service to ensure the process flows as well as possible.

News Bites

Wrapping for charity

HAVE your Christmas presents all wrapped up to help raise money for a local children's hospice.

Hobbycraft on Winchester Road, Basingstoke, will be offering personalised gift wrapping in return for a charity donation on December 16 from 12pm to 2pm.

Donations will support Naomi House Children's Hospice.

To find out more, and for more locations, visit www.hobbycraft.co.uk.

Trains and dinosaurs

CHILDREN can enjoy epic playtime fun involving a huge train track and dinosaurs at Basingstoke's track party next month.

Six play sessions will be hosted at Old Basing Village Hall on January 10 from 10am.

The hourly sessions will include a big train track, car ramps and dinosaurs at just £7 per child and free entry for adults.

For more information, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yde5xtm>.

Be health wise

A HEALTH body is asking people to make use of online services ahead of a busy winter period.

The North Hampshire clinical commissioning group (CCG) has advised people to register for online services to book appointments, access records and order repeat prescriptions.

To register, visit nhs.uk/GPonline.

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Why not pop in and meet the team?

Advertisorial

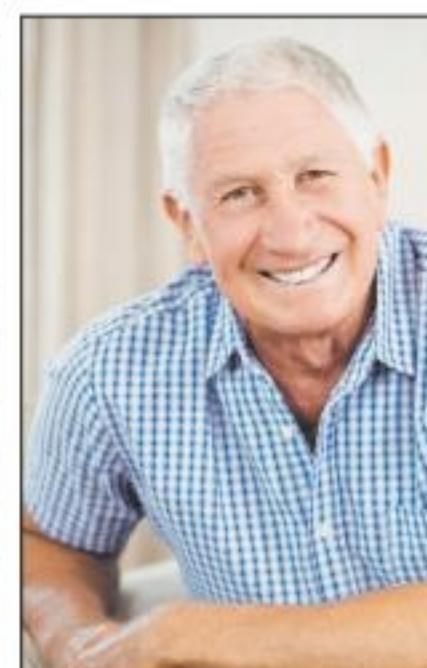
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Patient testimonial
I have recently had both my dentures replaced by Dentalia and I would like to thank everyone for making what might have been very traumatic for me, a truly trouble free experience.

I attended several routine fittings and on the last one I was advised to try to keep them in for several hours, to see how they fit but to let them know immediately if there were any discomfort, but in any case not to leave it too long before I returned to explain any soreness or fitting issues.

That was about 6 months ago and I have never returned or contacted Dentalia since.

I have never needed to, in fact the only reason I did once feel I should contact them was to apologise for not contacting them at all since my final fitting.

I am now writing to thank Dentalia and in particular David for all the excellent work they did for me and the fantastic customer service throughout, well done.

Mr P

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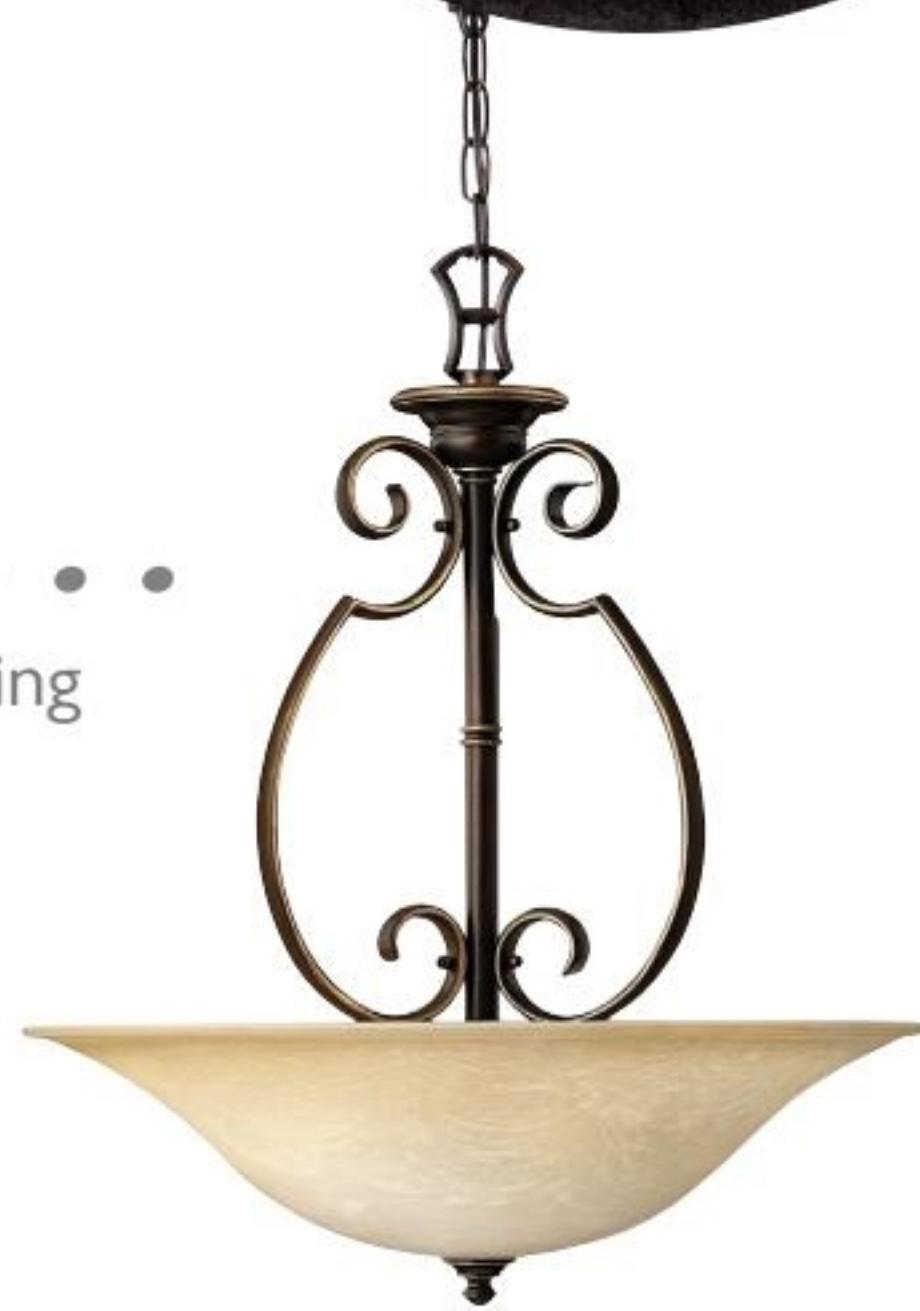
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PROPERTYWEEKLY

New Year moves: Act now to get ahead of the competition

Hoping to sell your home in the new year? Romans has some valuable advice to put you one giant leap ahead of the competition...

Antony Gibson, Romans' Sales Managing Director, explains: "The simplest and most effective thing you can do is instruct an agent a few weeks before Christmas so your property is listed on the major portals before the new year rush.

"January is an exceptionally busy time for the property market, when a flood of homes become available and buyers are looking in their droves. With so many properties being listed at this time, there is more intense competition and it can be harder to make your home stand out from the crowd.

"But, if you instruct a good agent before Christmas, your property

By Romans Group

will appear online over the festive period, when there is usually a smaller number of homes listed but a huge number of people looking."

Every year the property portals report a surge in traffic from Christmas Day through to New Year's Day, with millions of online property searches carried out during this period. Last year, Rightmove's website saw more than 12 million visits between Boxing Day and New Year's Eve as more people made use of their holiday to home hunt.

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ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE

Bringing video game to life on the stage

A stage adaptation of a video game sounds like an unusual production to bring to a theatre but that's just what audiences at The Anvil can look forward to in the new year.

See inside for more



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ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE



Video game comes to the stage

By Josh Cox

ANVIL Arts will be hosting the UK's first ever stage adaption of a video game as *Dear Esther* Live lands on stage in January.

The critically-acclaimed game *Dear Esther* will be played out by actor Thomas McMullan while composer Jessica Curry will be conducting the live score.

Ahead of the show, Jessica Curry, pictured, has taken time out to talk to us about the origins of the performance and what the audience can expect from this unique show.

Jessica started by briefly summing up *Dear Esther*, saying: "It's a very beautiful game, and is actually like watching a film. It's set on a desert island and has themes of love, grief and adventure that players uncover while travelling the island. We actually started a new



genre of game called Walking Simulator."

Talking about her up and coming show Jessica went on to explain: "This is our first UK tour and is indeed the only stage adaptation of a video game in the UK, as least that I know of, and we are very excited to bring

this to the Anvil next year."

When asked about how she got involved with *Dear Esther*, Jessica said: "My husband was doing a PhD and decided to create a video game to explore in his writings.

"At the time he asked me to write the score and from there things fell into place. The game was born from passion as opposed to going out to make money and I think people can

really tell that."

Dear Esther Live will take place at The Anvil on Saturday January 27 at 8pm. Full price tickets to the show range between £19.50 and £22.50. There are discounts for under 25s and full time students.

For more information or to book tickets, you can call the Anvil Arts box office on 01256 844244, or visit anvilarts.org.uk.

Good vs Evil

SHOW: A special production of *Vakula and the Devil - A Russian Christmas Eve* will be presented by Chroma Ensemble on December 14 at The Haymarket at 7.30pm.

Audiences can expect a magical retelling of Nikolai Gogol's story *Christmas Eve*, interwoven with a ravishing selection of Russian and Ukrainian music and song.

Tickets are £18.

Force Ten blows in

MUSIC: Force Ten, a rock and roll four-piece covers band, will be gigging at The Barley Mow in Oakley this Saturday at 8.30pm.

Force Ten play a unique blend of classic and modern rock anthems. They perform covers from artists such as Queen, David Bowie, Red Hot Chili Peppers, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks and Kings of Leon.

Get Ready for...

MUSIC: Get Ready will be performing a variety of Mod covers at The Hop Poles in Alton this Saturday.

The four-piece band capture the cool styles of the Sixties from Motown to Northern Soul to the British invasion.

The gig starts at 9pm.

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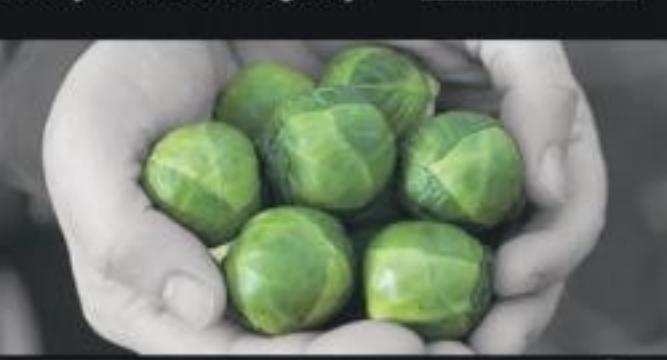
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ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE

Traditional Russian ballets staged

By Josh Cox

RUSSIA'S acclaimed ballet company returns for the 16th time to tour the UK in the New Year.

The Russian State Ballet of Siberia and The Orchestra of the Russian State Ballet will be performing three ballets, The Snow Maiden, The Nutcracker and Swan Lake at The Anvil at the beginning of February.

The Russian State Ballet of Siberia has established itself as one of Russia's leading ballet companies and has built an international reputation for delivering performances of outstanding quality and depth.

The soloists and corps de ballet are exceptional, delighting audiences with their physical ability and beautiful costumes as each story unfolds to the accompaniment of the orchestra.

The company comprises more than 40 dancers and 30 musicians. For the 2018 season, it will merge traditional and digital worlds with an imaginative staging set against an ever-changing colourful backdrop with magical special effects.

Commenting on the production, artistic director Sergei Bobrov said: "It is always a pleasure to bring the unique traditions of Russian ballet to British audiences. Touring across the UK with a full company of dancers



as well as highly skilled musicians is always exciting for me, it is very special to have the power of a symphony orchestra bringing the choreography to life on stage."

The Snow Maiden is on February 1 at 7.30pm; The Nutcracker will be performed on February 2 at 7.30pm and Swan Lake will be on February 3 at 2.30pm and 7.30pm.

Tickets range from £41.50 to £19. To book, call the Anvil Arts box office on 01256 844244. Further information can be found at www.raymondgubbay.co.uk

From Swing to Ska

MUSIC: The experienced and versatile singer Chris Baker will be performing a free gig at The Riverdene in Basingstoke on December 15 from 9pm.

Chris has a wide range of songs to choose from spanning the 70s, 80s and 90s including artists such as Neil Diamond, David Bowie, Rolling Stones, The Killers, and Depeche Mode.

Twas the night...

THEATRE: The Night Before Christmas, presented by Big Wooden Horse, runs at The Haymarket from tomorrow to Sunday showing at various times.

From the team behind shows such as Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!, The Way Back Home and Aliens Love Underpants comes this Christmas classic.

Tickets are £13.

A Dickens' tale

THEATRE: The Haymarket will be hosting A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens this Christmas.

Join The Dickens Theatre Company, as they bring to life some of Dickens's favourite characters.

The show runs on Tuesday and Wednesday at various times.

Basingstoke
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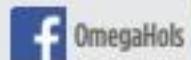
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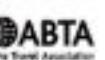
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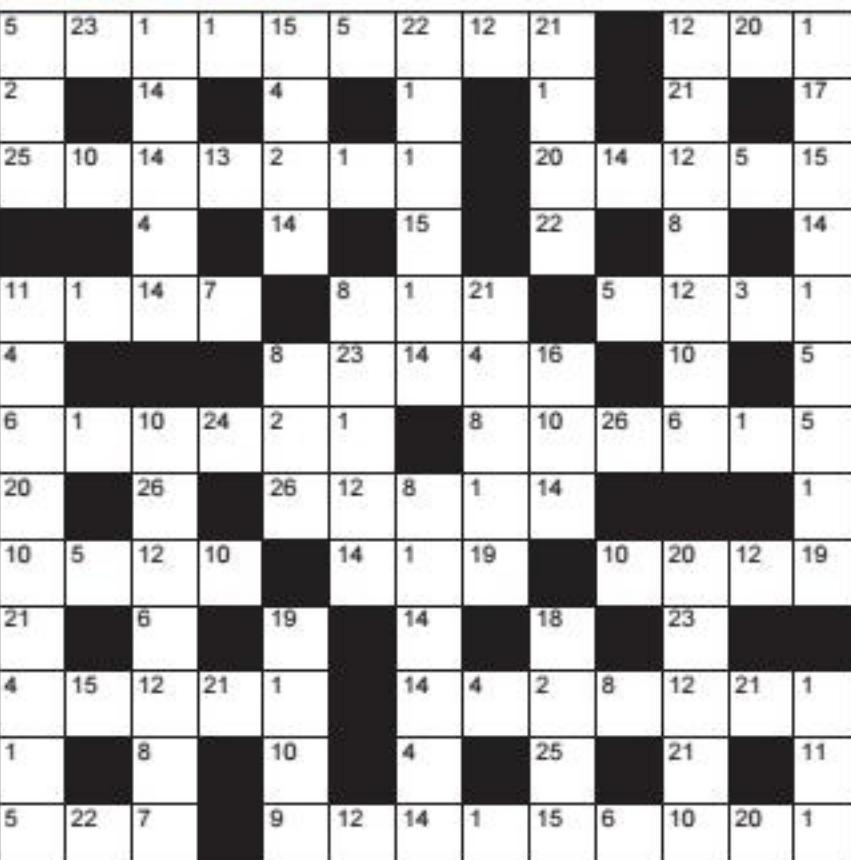


ABTA



Your weekly puzzle challenge

CROSS CODE



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1	E	2	3	Z	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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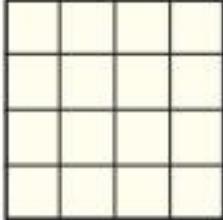
Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

MAGIC SQUARE

SPILL SALE DETAILS

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.



NONAGRAM



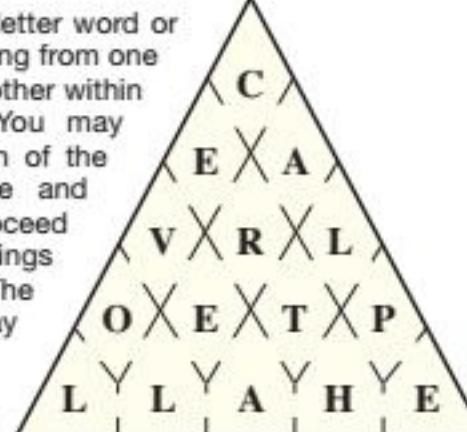
How many words of four letters or more can you make from this Nonogram? Each word must use the central letter, and each letter may be used only once. At least one word using all nine letters can be found.

Guidelines:

25 Good; 30 Very Good; 35 Excellent.

Any word found in the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is eligible with the following exceptions: proper nouns; plural nouns, pronouns and possessives; third person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractions and abbreviations; vulgar slang words; variant spellings of the same word (where another variant is also eligible).

WORD PYRAMID



Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openings in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.

FIVE ALIVE

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NI		OP		UY
OE	XC	TE	AO	LN
TC		NT		GP
ES	IP	DO	CE	HS

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

EQUALISER

6	10
8	○ 3 ○ 1
3	3
7	○ 3 ○ 2
2	6

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same. Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

All puzzles on this page are supplied by Sirius Media Services. To try more of our puzzles interactively online go to www.puzzledrome.com

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SUDOKU

Easy

Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box.

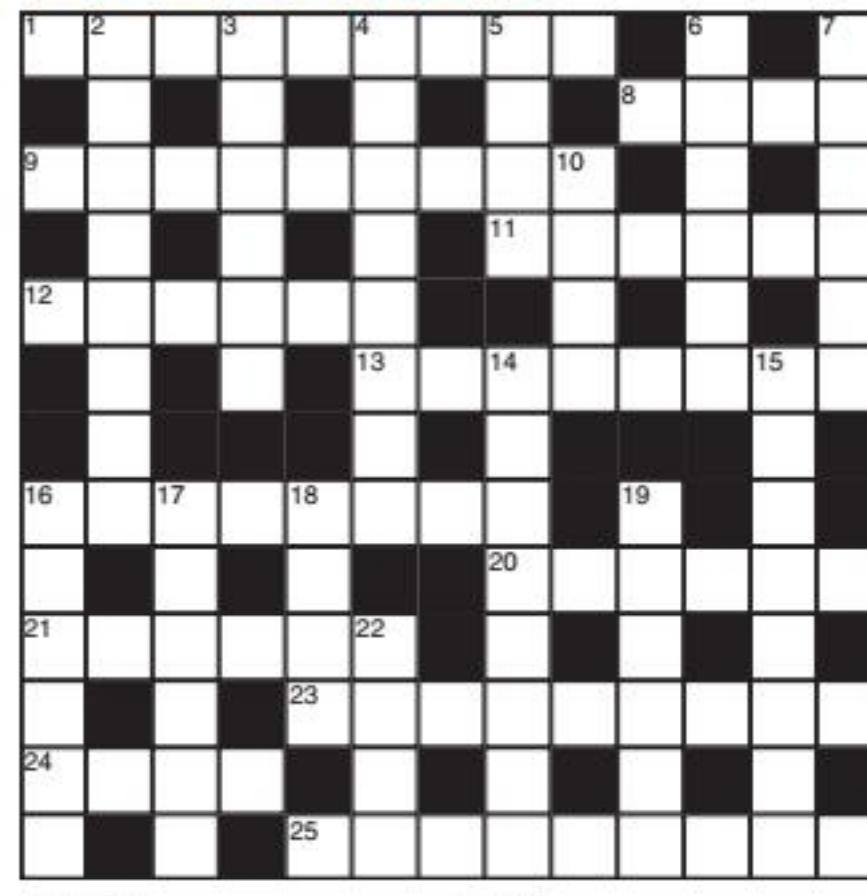
5		6	3			2		
8	6				3	1	5	
	3	2						7
			4					
		9	2	1				3
2			3	4				
		4		7	8	1		
4	7		9				3	
5	8	1	7	6	9	2	6	9

			9	5	7			
		8		9				
3			4	1	5			
	7			4		1		
	6				4			
4		2	5	8	3			
6					1			
2		3		6	9			
9				2				

SOLUTIONS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32									
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32											
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35										
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38									
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41								
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44							
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48					
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



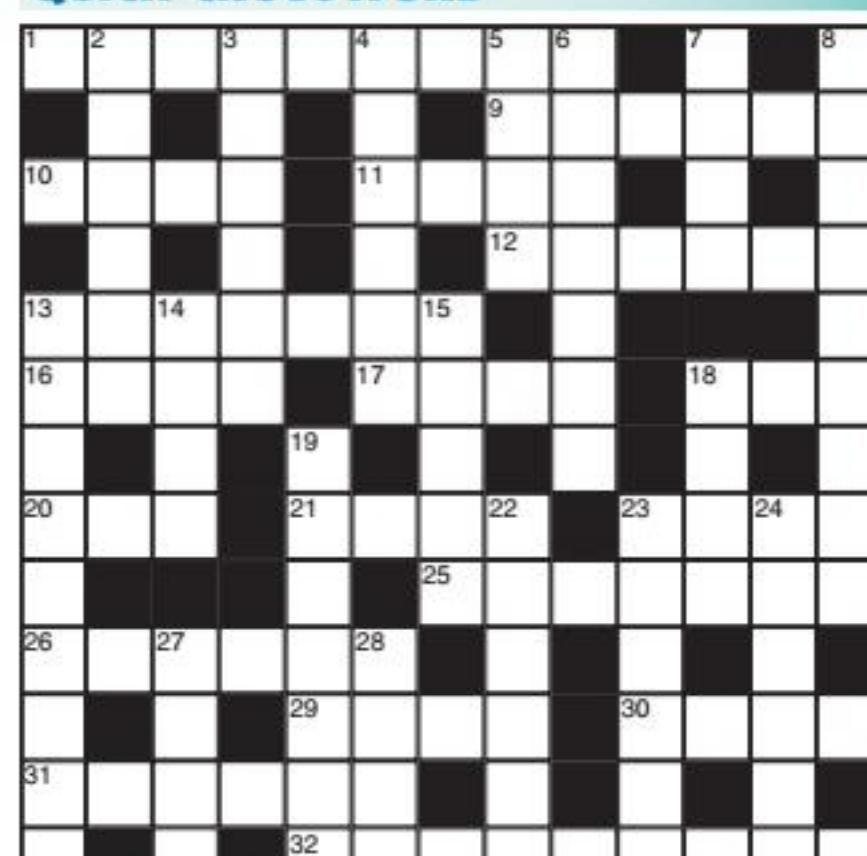
ACROSS

1. Deficiency during brief season in America (9)
2. Showing indecision in arranging the satin (8)
3. Truly about a friend (6)
4. Go round after a puncture in a panic (4,4)
5. Left out a boar (4)
6. Central parts in clue distorted (6)
7. Search thoroughly for the little creature (6)
10. Airs another eastern garment (4)
14. One of the passageways of power (8)
15. Peevish cat who always looks gloomy (8)
16. Took one's seat with anger at the irony perhaps (6)
17. It is not often that this is found (6)
18. The mosque's first prayer? (4)
19. Catch medical specialist on strike (6)
22. Girl booked and badly hurt (4)

DOWN

2. Conditional release (6)
3. Healthy (6)
4. Substance (6)
5. Without feeling (4)
6. Molasses (7)
7. Cultivate the land (4)
8. Went in again (2-7)
13. Exactness (9)
14. Afresh (4)
15. Awaken (5)
18. Prejudice (4)
19. Without taste (7)
22. Toboggan (6)
23. Soul (6)
24. Breed of sheep (6)
27. Trail (4)
28. Ice cream holder (4)

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Suite of rooms (9)
2. Infected with bacteria (6)
3. Snatch (4)
4. Precipitation (4)
5. Procure (6)
6. Trick, illusion (9)
7. Hire (4)
8. Small loaf (4)
9. Extra run at cricket (3)
10. Farm animal (3)
11. Scottish loch (4)
12. Exactly alike (4)
13. Slippered by (7)
14. Infected with bacteria (6)
15. Small pool (4)
16. Afresh (4)
17. Trick, illusion (9)
18. Without taste (7)
19. Without taste (7)
20. Small pool (4)
21. Scottish loch (4)
22. Trick, illusion (9)
23. Without taste (7)
24. Breed of sheep (6)
25. Slippered by (7)
26. Inf

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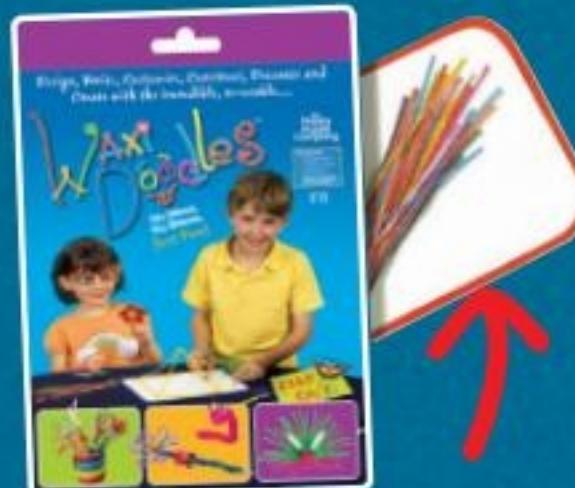


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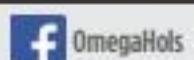
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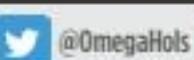
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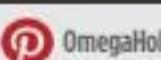
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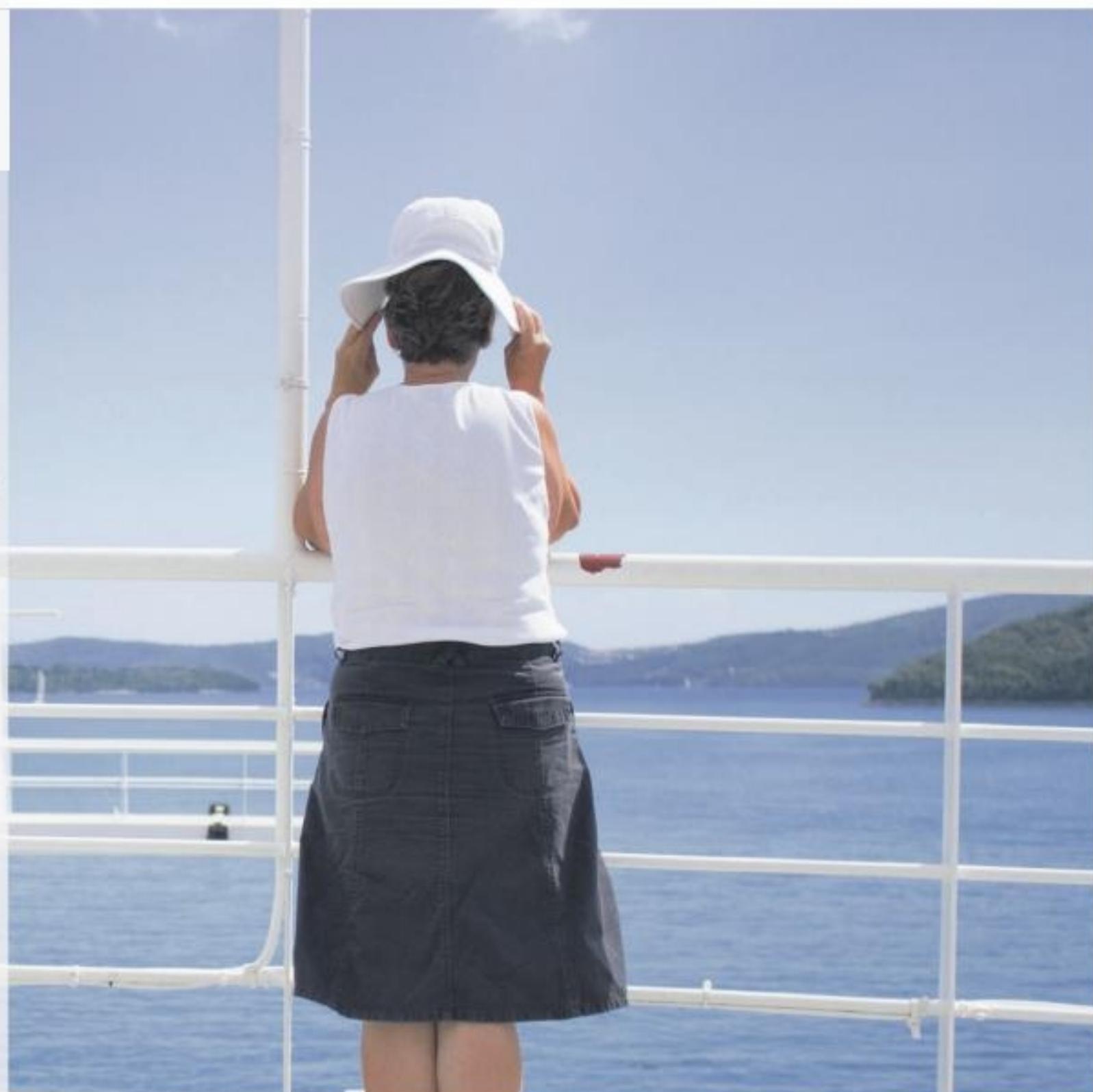
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Nippy, stylish and compact – a little corker

By Tony Yates

I'M going to start by saying I like the design of the C3 Aircross. And the reason for me coming to this easy conclusion is simple - I personally like a decent compact SUV that can do all of the things a family man like me wants. Such as the school run, those weekly trips to the shops, or the odd weekend away. I also like a vehicle that's able to go where others would normally fail. Of course the beefy ride height and flared arches can be a little off-putting for some - but believe me, this really is a little corker.

Power & efficiency

The C3 I had on test was powered by a 3 cylinder 1199cc 5-speed turbocharged petrol engine that has 110HP and a very respectable top speed of 115mph, plus a 0-62 time of 11.3 seconds - which in my book is not bad for a 3 cylinder. Fuel consumption is also very good with a combined figure of 56.5 mpg.



Worth taking a look at with some interesting little additons

On the road

It's a little soft, but into the corners, it feels very well balanced. A big plus for the C3 is that it has a decent amount of torque - in fact, 205Nm of it - which allows it to pull very well from pretty much any gear - which surprisingly,

made the C3 a joy to drive no matter what the road conditions were doing. The brakes also felt good and firm. As for the suspension, it actually absorbs England's bumpy roads really well - but as I said, the ride was a little soft.

This is where it starts to get interesting. My test car was fitted with 'Grip

Control Technology' something I knew little about, until now. Basically what it does is offer an enhanced traction ability on all types of terrain - be that sand, snow, or slippery road conditions. So how does it work? Well, I'm glad you asked that. The system works with the vehicle's ESP system to maintain the best possible traction from both front wheels. It does this with the help of five selectable operating modes which can be chosen by the driver from a dedicated control button mounted on the centre console.

Design & technology

On the inside, the interior is not bad - but I don't like how Citroen have mixed up the interior colours. Although, on a positive note - it does have easy to read dials and all the controls are in the right place and well set out. There is, however, a small problem. Some of the interior plastics feel a little 'scratches' and I would have liked a smoother feel to them. I know you have

to spend less to keep the price down for the consumer - but sometimes it's worth going that little bit further if it means you get something that feels a little bit more upmarket.

Standard equipment is good such as, ABS/EBD/EBA, hill start assist, driver & front passenger lateral & curtain airbags, iPod/MP3 connection, automatic air conditioning, six speakers, steering wheel-mounted audio control and split/folding rear bench seat.

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To sum up

I'm going to give the C3 Aircross four stars in this test, not only because I like its looks, but also because I believe it's worth taking a look at if you are in the market for a compact SUV.

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Cup heroics marred by loss

By George Welch

MINNOWS Hartley Wintney will host Vanarama National League play-off chasers Bromley in the first round proper of the Buildbase FA Trophy.

The Row set up the tie after beating near neighbours Farnborough 2-1 in the final qualifying round last week.

Paul Hodges and Jake Baxter got the goals for victorious Hartley on a freezing Wednesday night to set up the tie against Bromley, who play three tiers above, on December 16.

However, like the first game after progressing from the last round against Gosport, Hartley suffered defeat after celebrating cup heroics.

Ten-man Row lost 2-0 at leaders AFC Rushden & Diamonds on Saturday to slip out of the Evo-Stik South East play-offs.

The away side played well and created a host of chances, and could have left Northamptonshire with something had a couple of controversial refereeing decisions fallen the other way.

Baxter, Hodges, Steven Duff and Rowan Vine (twice) went close early on as the Row started brightly.

Rushden soaked up the pressure and enjoyed a productive spell them-

selves midway through the first half, Tom Lorraine twice going close.

Vine could have grabbed the opener shortly before half time but the veteran striker pinged the golden opportunity wide.

Well-placed Ryan Robbins should have given Rushden the lead straight after the restart before the game heated up.

Hartley players were left incensed by an alleged 'spitting' incident and referee Scott Chalkley had to intervene, although no cards were issued.

The pivotal moment of the match arrived on the hour when Steve Noakes was alleged to have brought Lorraine down when through on goal.

The Row players claimed 'dive'.

The home crowd and Rushden players claimed 'foul'.

Chalkley awarded the free kick on the edge of the box and issued a red card to Noakes.

The hosts used the extra man to their advantage and took the lead 12 minutes later through Robbins.

Rushden finished strongly and netted a second though Ben Farrell.

Hartley (7th) host Moneyfields (4th) on Saturday and travel to Thame United (12th) on Tuesday.



Jake Baxter and Paul Hodges, both pictured earlier in the season, scored against Farnborough in the FA trophy

Picture: Andy Nunn

Good performance in 'home' tournament

RED-HOT Justin Rose continued his fine form with a tied fifth placed finish at the Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas.

The north Hampshire golfer carded a 277 11-under par and was seven shots off winner Rickie Fowler.

Rose, who won the World Golf Championships-HSBC Champions tournament in his last PGA event in October, started fantastically and was in contention for another title from the off.

He recorded four-under par for

rounds one and two as he delivered two assured days with only two dropped shots. Five birdies and four bogeys followed on day three as his momentum slowed – but it was still good enough for second heading into the final round.

The final round began with a bogey on the second hole but five birdies up to the 11th kept him in contention.

But Rose dropped three shots on the 11th and 12th to slip down the leaderboard. A birdie on the 14th followed to end fifth, his fifth top-10 finish in a row.

Rose, who moved his family to the Bahamas in 2014, admitted the tournament felt like a home competition.

He said after round three: "It feels like a home game but I'm not always sure that's an advantage. Especially in a crowd and atmosphere like this it's a lot more intimate."

"I can see everybody. When you play in front of thousands of people they all blend in, whereas here I know exactly where my kids, wife and friends are."

"It requires a bit more focus."



raising challenge from now until March.

"We need a minimum of £20,000 to maintain a reasonable squad of players. This would require a tremendous effort."

In a rallying cry, he called for more people to enrol as members and contribute to boost the budget donations.

Manager Terry Brown confirmed that as an economy measure the club had let two non-contract players go.

He expects full back Marcus John-

son-Schuster and winger Ashleigh Artwell to be plying their trade elsewhere shortly.

Brown added that he was "excited" by the prospect of moving to Winklesbury stadium at the end of the season, as Town prepare to say goodbye to the Camrose after a 70-year run in April.

Contact secretary Steve Williams on 01256 770434, 07966921584 or stewill@hotmail.co.uk to sign up to any fundraising initiatives.

'Stoke launch £20k appeal to 'maintain a reasonable squad'

A FUNDRAISING target of £20,000 has been set for a 'reasonable' Basingstoke Town squad next season, as the club elected board members to try and secure an uncertain future.

Following a special meeting at the Camrose last week, the board of the new community club now comprises Steve Letch (chairman), Steve Williams (secretary), Colin Phillimore (treasurer), Martin French, Sarah Parsons and Colin Stoker.

And the board wasted no time in launching the fundraising appeal.

According to Letch, the club has responded well to the task of raising money for the playing budget, for which club owner Rafi Razzak had made no provision at the beginning of the season.

He said: "We started with nothing in the pot and have coped well up to this point. But the current rate at which we are raising funds from a variety of sources means we have a big, big fund-

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Sport Bites

Buffaloes near miss

ICE HOCKEY: Basingstoke Buffalo's patchy form continued with a thrilling 8-7 loss at Peterborough Phantoms on Sunday.

Despite leading 5-2 halfway through the middle period, the Buffs sacrificed their advantage during a disastrous third period.

A 57th minute Peterborough equaliser forced overtime and the hosts won it in a shootout.

The Buffalo have two more games before Christmas, both at home to Bristol Pitbulls on Sunday and Bracknell Hornets on December 17.

Tadley climb table

FOOTBALL: Tadley Cavella leapt two positions to second in Wessex League Division One after a 2-0 win at AFC Stoneham.

The promotion chasers took advantage of leaders Andover New Street and Christchurch's week off, as well as Romsey Town's shock home defeat to bottom club Folland Sports to increase the pressure at the top.

Whitchurch United lost their third game in a row with a 1-0 loss at Laverstock & Ford.

Tadley have a big game at pace-setters Andover on Saturday while Whitchurch (13th) travel to Totton & Eling (14th).

More players needed

FOOTBALL: Basingstoke Town Ladies have two more games this calendar year – both home league fixtures.

Languishing second bottom, Town, who were without a game last weekend, are still seeking their first league win of the season.

'Stoke welcome Larkhall Athletic Ladies on Sunday and St Nicholas Ladies on December 17.

The team are still on the lookout for new players to boost their squad.

Email basingstokeladiesfc@hotmail.co.uk to register your interest.

Teams on the road

RUGBY: Tadley Tigers and Basingstoke RFC are back in action this weekend having had last weekend off.

Tadley will be looking to build on their 73-12 BBO Premier Division demolition of Abingdon at the end of last month with a trip to Bletchley on Saturday.

Basingstoke RFC travel to Warlingham in search of their first London 3 South West win of the season.

Inside: Row's cup heroics marred by league loss | 'Stoke launch £20k appeal to maintain players | Fifth place in Bahamas for Rose

Bison slip up to narrowly miss out on breaking 25-year record

By George Welch

THE chance of beating a 25-year club record went begging as Basingstoke Bison suffered their first league defeat of the season.

The seemingly unbeatable Herd had reeled off 10 straight league wins and victory over Streatham and Milton Keynes Thunder over the weekend would have equalled their 1992 record.

However, a 2-0 defeat at home to Streatham ended any hope of the class of '18 bettering that record.

Vanya Antonov (twice) and Roman Malinik went close early on for Bison but it was an unmarked Alex Sampford who opened the scoring for Streatham with a rebounded effort.

Captain Aaron Connolly and Hallam Wilson both had chances in quick succession for the hosts in the middle period – but again it was Bison's rear-guard that was breached.

Adam Wood got the goal to give the party-pooper visitors a two-goal cushion, all but ending 'Stoke's chances of breaking records in the process.

Head coach Doug Sheppard branded the defeat as "unacceptable", but his side were back to winning ways the following day with a 3-2 victory at Milton Keynes.

An improved Herd side took an

eighth minute lead through Connolly and it was 2-0 five minutes later thanks to a Tomas Karpov strike.

Ryan Handisides pulled a goal back for Thunder at the start of the second period, and that's the way it stayed until Bison scored with less than three minutes to go to secure the points.

The goal came from hotshot Connolly, whose goals ensured his side made no mistakes to return to winning ways.

There was still time for another goal for the hosts, but Handisides' strike nine seconds from time didn't allow enough time for a comeback.

Afterwards, Sheppard said: "We were not great Saturday but it was good to bounce back last night and rescue something from the weekend in Milton Keynes.

"Our home performance was unacceptable. We will re-group this week and we'll get back at it.

"We've been playing good hockey for over a month now which made Saturday even harder to take but we'll get right back at it this weekend and look to continue what we were doing."

Bison turn their attention to the Autumn Cup when they play Peterborough Phantoms at Planet Ice on Saturday before aiming for redemption when they visit Streatham in the league the next day.

Captain Aaron Connolly scored twice against Milton Keynes Thunder to lead by example and help Bison back to winning ways following defeat to Streatham.
Picture: grantking photography.com



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